

Wisconsin Urban Forestry Council

November 4, 2011

South Central DNR Service Center
3911 Fish Hatchery Road, Fitchburg WI

Members in attendance: Shirley Brabender Mattox, Patty Dreier, Tom Dunbar, Marla Eddy, Mark Freberg, John Gall, Leif Hubbard, Greg Kessler, Tom Landgraf, Don Merkes, Art Ode, Ken Ottman, Vijai Pandian, Jordan Skiff, Bryan Spencer, Jeff Treu, Kelli Tuttle, Les Werner, Kevin Westphal

Members absent: Robert Brush, Bob Dahl, Dan Traas, Joe Wilson, Jeff Wolters

Ex Officio members in attendance: Dick Rideout, Jeff Roe, Laura Wyatt

DNR in attendance: Mark Heyde, Anne Linkert, Darrell Zastrow

Call to Order and Introductions

Kelli Tuttle

Welcome to Darrell Zastrow, DNR, who will share and discuss the Strategic Direction Operations Plan.

Approval of 6/17/11 and 9/9/11 meetings: Tom Dunbar moved, Leif Hubbard seconded for approval of both sets. Carried by majority vote.

DNR Strategic Direction Operations Plan

Darrell Zastrow

Darrell presented an overview of the Strategic Direction Operations Plan, highlighting areas pertinent to Urban Forestry. Darrell opened the floor for questions and discussion.

- Ken Ottman moved to have a letter drafted by the Council in support of Strategic Direction, including affirmation that Urban Forestry Council will - and is interested in - playing a role in continuation of implementation of Strategic Direction. Seconded by Art Ode. Kelli reminded group to speak with WAA, etc., to get their feedback, and to determine whether those groups are also supportive.

ACTION: Letter support Strategic Direction be sent to Division of Forestry

10:45-10:52 break

Future Focus – Task Focus

Mark Heyde

Mark introduced handouts: recommendations - as copied from last Urban Forestry Council report - Urban Forestry Council mission statement/definition of Council role, list of future focus/potential action items. Mark gave an overview of the work done to date, and stated that today's exercise would be to circle back to 100 item list, and talk about possible admissions to list of potential action items. Ask: what are the outcomes, sense of urgency, how doable, timeframe, scope, scale of action for each item. Let's have discussion and distillation of list. Council would then take the top of the list and come up with the outcomes, etc.

12:12-12:43 break for lunch

Future Focus – Task Focus, continued:

Mark reopened the discussion with the suggestion that the task at hand is to form groups as follows: Expand and Manage, Encourage to Invest, Collaborations and Partnerships, Jobs. Members of these groups were chosen by show of hands, yielding:

- Expand and manage: Art, Kelli, Marla, Les, John Gall, Jeff Treu, Vijai, Jordan, Ken

- Encourage Investment: Greg, Kevin, Bryan, Marla, Tom L., Tom D.
- Collaboration: Shirley, Tom D., Don M., Mark F., Leif
- Jobs: Encourage jobs creation: Les, Tom L., Leif, Ken, Kevin Westphal, Tom D.

Mark offered a charge to these groups: Keep in mind the voice of urban forestry and role of council. Draw from variety of sources to paint a picture – from outcome perspective – of the outcomes from that group, create a list of key concepts which would drive future actions. Use as resources the statewide Forest Strategy document, the previous work of the Council, and others. Information and data are available via an existing database. Requests for specific data can be submitted to DNR.

ACTION: Issue groups will meet and report back at March meeting.

There was a brief discussion – opened by Kevin – about the current funding source for the Urban Forestry Council, and whether other funding sources could be pursued. The current source is DNR. Dick indicated that DNR does not have the resources to be a fiscal manager for the Council, nor can the Council apply for a DNR grant. Tom Dunbar offered the Center for Resilient Cities as a potential fiscal agent as needed.

Urban Forestry Council Awards Program

Jeff Treu

Jeff Treu is the new chair of the awards committee. Jeff asked for volunteers to serve on the committee. Jordan, Tom, Jeff, and Jeff raised hands. Contacts from the public in regard to awards should be forwarded to Laura.

Jeff stated that nominations are needed for Lifetime Achievement, Distinguished Service, and Elected Official awards. He advised Council to look at website to get a feel for who might be an appropriate nominee. Big projects are not always the most important. Wanted ideas and input from all areas. Nominations are due December 30-31. We can consider more than one award in any category.

Mark F. shared his experience of presenting an award to the Forest County Potawatomi Tribe, saying it was interesting and fun. Mark noted the tribe's cultural vs. community approach to trees, and then offered a description of the award process and ritual event. Laura noted that through this award contact process, the tribe has expressed an interest in becoming a Tree City USA.

ACTION: UFCouncil members will consider and submit award nominations by Dec. 31.

AB-216 Billboard Vegetation Bill

Shirley Brabender Mattox

Shirley: "Legislators don't have a clue about trees." She offered a copy of the fiscal estimate narrative for review by the group. Prior to 2006, standards existed for getting a permit. With this bill, the standards are removed, so all permit applicants receive the permit. Shirley noted that the bill's "fiscal impact on the vegetation removal on 703 miles of right-of-way is valued at over 100 million dollars". Putting a value on our public landscaping, feels the bill is not necessary.

It was further noted that the Council cannot make a recommendation, and Shirley asks that DNR make a recommendation. Individuals may also make recommendations, as may other entities. Tom D. suggests that the DNR could support the bill if billboard companies were charged.

Shirley made a motion: "Whereas AB 216 could have direct impact on trees along urban corridors, the Wisconsin Urban Forestry Council asks the Wisconsin DNR – Division of Forestry to oppose this bill in a similar fashion to the opposition voiced by the Wisconsin Department of Transportation. We are especially concerned about Section 15 of the bill: 84.305(3)(c) which eliminates the requirement to notify adjacent landowners and municipalities of vegetation removal." Motion passes by majority.

ACTION: An advisory letter will be sent to Paul DeLong.

Laura noted that a question has been raised about ability to perform business via email. After discussion with attorney, this has been dropped. There was a further question about how many Council members can meet without needing public notice. Laura's understanding is that a walking quorum of seven members is the limit before public notice is required. This will affect the committees just formed. Shirley asked if there is something called a working committee, and does that have different guidelines? Laura will clarify definition of walking quorum, and will get clarification on public meeting requirements.

ACTION: Laura will seek clarification on requirements.

Jeff Roe presented some printed updates, and reviewed highlights of those updates.

Ken: is there going to be an opportunity for the Urban Forestry Council to be represented at December 5 meeting regarding urban forestry management plans, and to have input? Jeff will bring for discussion.

Dick: Regarding joint networking at Johnson's nursery: Connected with Secretary of Agriculture, then Director of Agricultural Marketing, then Marketing Specialist. Interest was expressed in developing a plan that would support diversity of trees at nurseries. There was also discussion about short term plantings for nurseries to stimulate nursery sustainability.

Open Mic

Kelli Tuttle

- Les noted budget lapses being distributed over UW system campuses. He also noted impact of sharp decrease in number of enrolled students. Urban forestry at Stevens Point is also anticipated to decline.
- Per Ken, Stevens Point produces 10% of the forestry graduates in the United States.
- Vijai stated that Brown County is receiving broad support from the public. 30% of calls at extension are related to urban forestry. He anticipates public outreach to increase due to a grant.
- Art completed tree inventory and management plan for City of Bayfield, using grant funds.
- Leif: "Things are evolving in the state."
- Marla is waiting to hear for approval of budget amendments. Madison will be hiring two arborist assistants to help with EAB. Madison is also working on tree inventory, and looking to hire assistants for that task as well. Serious concerns over EAB.
- Jeff Treu offered apologies for missing last meeting, appreciative of clarifications on his behalf.
- Ken: Thanks for listening.
- Mark F. stated that the Packers will do another year of First Downs for Trees.
- Dick: Completed Tour de Trees, raised over \$7,000 on behalf of the tour.
- Jeff R. noted that CTMI starts next week, with 20 students this year.
- Bryan noted that, thanks to DNR, received Urban Forestry grant for parks tree inventory and EAB management plan.
- Don is continuing EAB plan with \$5,000 match. Neighborhood newsletter carried article on value of urban forestry.
- Tom D. removed 22,000 square feet of asphalt to build outdoor classroom in Milwaukee. In Madison, Resilience Research Center is under way.
- Shirley noted participation of Tracy Salisbury in spreading the word on urban forestry.
- Patty stated that storm cleanup in Stevens Point now completed, will take a long time to recover. TCUSA came through for Stevens Point.
- Greg advised the Council to keep tabs on assembly bill 303. Assembly approved, but failed to send to Senate.

Next meeting will be at the Capitol in March. The specific date will be set based on the recommendation of legislative staff since we will be nearly the end of the legislative session.

2:35: meeting adjourned.